



TRANSCRIPT REPORT

Date: February 10, 2006

#684 Agenda item No: 1

Council Action Date: February 10, 2006

To: CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD
From: SANDRA MUÑOZ, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Subject: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve the minutes of the special meeting of December 7, 2005 #683.
Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 8, 2005 #684.

Leo Burke
Vice-Chairman



**CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD
MINUTES
#683
MEETING
DECEMBER 08, 2005
Chairman George G. Sinopoli**



Leo Burke, Vice Chairman Vernon Chong, Board Member
James C. Crump, Jr., Board Member William D. Jackson, Board Member

The California Veterans Board met in a special meeting at California Veterans Home-Yountville, 100 California Drive, Yountville, CA 94599 at 1:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Board Members George G. Sinopoli Chairman, Leo P. Burke Vice-Chairman, Vernon Chong Member, James C. Crump, Jr. Member, William D. Jackson Member

Absent: None

Chairman Sinopoli presided

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

WELCOMING REMARKS

John Borders, Invocation

Larry Lattman, Pledge of Allegiance

George Sinopoli

Introductions of California Veterans Board Members

CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD CONSENT ITEMS

1. Formal Appeal Hearing of Joseph Engmark (05-07)

RECOMMENDATION

The Board met in closed session and by unanimous vote, the Board affirms the decision of the Veterans Home of California discharging the Appellant and denies the appeal. The

Board further recommends that the Appellant be referred to a United States Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center for drug rehabilitation. That is the Board's decision.

2. Review of Record of Appeal of Robert Rowe (05-05)

RECOMMENDATION

The Board met in closed session and by unanimous vote defers its decision of Robert Lowe due to lack of preparedness.

3. Deliberations on Westley Johnson (04-12)

RECOMMENDATION

The Board met in closed session. Board Member W. Jackson moved for admission, Board Member Crump seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

AYES: Board Members Crump, W. Jackson, and Sinopoli

No: Board Member Burke

ABSTAIN: Board Member Chong

Chairman Sinopoli declared the motion carried.

ADJOURNED at 4:06 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION (if necessary or required)

The general reason or reasons for a closed session, and the specific statutory authority therefore, are (1) to consider the appointment or employment of a public employee under the authority of Section 11126(a) of the Government Code; and (2) to confer with or receive advice from the Board's legal counsel regarding pending litigation under the authority of Section 11126(E)(2)(A), (2)(B), and (3) of the Government Code.



**CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD
MINUTES
#684
MEETING
DECEMBER 09, 2005
Chairman George G. Sinopoli**



Leo Burke, Vice Chairman Vernon Chong, Board Member
James C. Crump, Jr., Board Member William D. Jackson, Board Member

The California Veterans Board met at the California Veterans Home-Yountville, 100 California Drive, Yountville, CA 94599 at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Board Members George G. Sinopoli Chairman, Leo P. Burke Vice-Chairman, Vernon Chong Member, James C. Crump, Jr. Member, William D. Jackson Member

Absent: None

Chairman Sinopoli presided

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

WELCOMING REMARKS

Fred Walton, Invocation

Tom Montague, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Sinopoli pleased with the crowd, the beautiful home serving veterans of California and doing a great job. Thanked Marcela personally for doing a great job serving the veterans in California.

Tom Johnson, Secretary, complimented Yountville and their audio-visual program, publications, and television network as being the finest in the country. Introduced staff consisting of Chief Legal Counsel and Deputy Secretary Rob Wilson, Under Secretary Retired Major General Roger Brautigan, and Deputy Secretary for Homes Bill Parente.

Chairman Sinopoli introduced Howell Jackson, Counsel, and Sandra Munoz, Executive Officer and Introduction of Board Members

CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD CONSENT ITEMS

1. MINUTES

By Executive Officer: Sandra Munoz

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 8, 2005

Board member Burke moved to approve November 8, 2005 Minutes. Board Member Jackson seconded. Board Member Crump, correction on Page 6, budget change proposal should be contract proposal because the budget change proposal was disapproved. The vote on minutes as corrected was as follows:

AYES: Board Member Burke, Chong, Crump, Jackson, and Sinopoli
NOES: None
ABSENT: None

Chairman Sinopoli declared the motion carried.

2. Chairman George Sinopoli and David Salopek from Allied Council with plaque presentation

Introduced Richie Dunn and Carol Swenson and thanked them for their service to the Veterans Home.

3. Departmental Updates and Departmental Division Reports

Report by: Secretary Tom Johnson informed the Board that under Cal Vet effective December 10, 2005 the loan rate for qualified veteran mortgage bond is increased to 5.5 percent. There are also outside people on the Finance Committee now who are experts in the area of bond financing.

Under Vet Services, lots of new things are being done. They are working with the Economic Development Department focusing on job availability for veterans in the San Joaquin Valley to include special mailings to veterans and a website hook up. Thank you for your service letters have been sent out to the Governor, and a similar letter has been sent out to the 101 Native American tribes in California. A new poster will also be out soon and widely distributed.

Reports on the homes are in the packets. New projects are Glavc, Redding, and Fresno. The Glavc Project is meeting deadlines ahead of time. The Director of the State Grant Program in Washington was supposed to be here, but was unable to get away.

The Military Quality of Life and Veterans Act was just signed by the President and did include \$85 million in the State Home Grants program. This insures that projects will receive funding next year.

Under Secretary Brautigan introduced and brought Bart and Marcela forward and presented wine in honor of Navy winning the Army/Navy game. He spoke about the Greater Los Angeles Ventura County home situation and while it is a challenging process, progress is being made. The next hurdle is the Quit Claim Deed, and they are working with the federal government to get the land deeded to them. Work is continuing week by week until the support agreements are done. Bill Parente was thanked for his hard work. An Executive level meeting with the leadership of Southern California was held. Ken Clark came up and met with Tom and the rest of them and will do that on a monthly basis.

Board Member Crump asked how the California Veterans Board and the various service organizations, how they could be of assistance to Mr. Brautigan and the Secretary to help move this project forward?

Mr. Brautigan commented that the Board and others have been helpful. He has met with various veteran service organizations, and everyone has already been involved, especially in LA. They are all stressing the importance of getting the home built.

Secretary Tom Johnson also commented on Redding that there is no news on the home situation, but the damage to the cemetery is being repaired. Funds have been given by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Cemetery Division had been requested. The first internment will take place December 21. With Fresno, they are working on the MOU. He concluded with comments on budgets and how it is a continual process.

4. Audience introductions were made.

Chairman Sinopoli thanked all of the heroes in the room.

5. OTHER UPDATES

Secretary Tom Johnson gave an update on HR2952. A version of the bill has been put in the Tax Reconciliation Act of 2005 (HR 4297), which was passed in December by the House. It will require Senate passage, and there is a Conference Committee, and a bill will come out of the Conference Committee to go to the President. The language in the new bill is compromised from what they had originally requested in HR2952. The primary concern is the cap. The cap right now is 340 million under existing law, and there are voter-approved opportunities of 485 million. The new bill gives a cap of 13.5 million the first year escalating up to around 60 million for the fifth year for a total of about 195 million. The plus is it opens up the QVMB program to the newer veterans. The compromise gives more veterans to serve, but there will be a question of how to get the money to serve them. The team is working with the Governor and other states and will keep the Board informed.

Chairman Sinopoli asked if there was anything on the State Home Grants Program budget. Secretary Johnson informed the Board it was approved in the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Act Affairs Appropriations Act of 2005, which was signed by the President. The Per Diem was fully funded. The \$85 million was also talked about earlier. There was language in the bill requiring the Department to present a report by January 16 on the capabilities of the Fort Ord Cemetery Project to be included in the National Cemetery system. They will follow up on that report.

Alex asked for the number on the bill that has to be watched that is included with taxes. Secretary Johnson answered with HR4297 that is the Tax Reconciliation Act for 2005.

6. ACTIVITY REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Crump participated in the following activities for the month of November: Played in the California Department of Veterans Affairs Golf Tournament on the 10th of November, he was the guest speaker for the Folsom City Veterans Celebration in Folsom on November 11, participated in the Veterans Day Parade in Sacramento on November 12, and attended the Tuskegee Airman National Board Meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona from December 2 – 5.

Board Member Burke attended the Northern California Veterans Cemetery Dedication in Redding, California on November 11. On November 17, he attended a Former California Veterans Board funeral of Stan Stanford in Forest Hill.

Dr. Chong attended the meeting in Monterey of this Board as well as the Cemetery Dedication in Redding, California.

Mr. William. Jackson took it a little easy this month after a discussion with his doctors. Three separate ceremonies were done on November 11. The Marine Corps. was honored on their birthday, the 10th of November. They started decorating Barstow for Christmas.

Chairman Sinopoli attended an American Legion function on November 2 and spoke to approximately 250 people. He attended a Fresno City College Veterans Program representing the Cal Vet Board on November 4. He attended Cal Vet Board Meetings on November 7 and 8. He participated in the largest Veterans Day Parade in the United States pertaining to and representing the California Veterans Board on November 11 and went to the Fresno VA Hospital to attend a luncheon there, and later that evening attended a function at the Veterans Hall honoring the veterans. On November 14, he met with a gentleman having a golf course built in Fresno called Running Horse and Jack Nicholson to discuss the possibility of a PGA golf tournament to be held at Running Horse Golf Course for the Central California Veterans Home and their benefit. There is a contract right now for eight years. The funds will be raised in Central California. It is going to be used exclusively for the veterans of Central California.

7. SELECT COMMITTEE REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Board Member Crump asked Secretary Johnson if there was any further progress on the contract, John Hanretty was working that issue. Secretary Johnson informed he did not have any further report on that at this time. Board Member Crump asked the secretary to ask Mr. Hanretty to give him a call.

Board Member Burke updated the Board on the Legislative Select Committee Assembly measures as follows: SB 310 and AB 787 were signed and chaptered. AB 1399 was expected February 25 from the printer and may be heard in Committee on March 27. AB 1542 vetoed by Governor.

Board Member Burked asked to be moved, received, and filed. Board Member Crump seconded. The vote was as follows:

AYES:	Board Member Burke, Crump, Jackson, Chong, and Sinopoli
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	None

Chairman Sinopoli declared the motion carried.

Board Member Crump updated the Board that the Policy and Procedures Committee is working on two policies. One is relative to third-party collection on individuals with health service plans. This will relate to individuals that are non-veterans that are residents in the home. He explained what happens is as the home provides care through the state system, there is no method of reimbursement for that health care. They are working on a proposed policy for the Board. They hope to have the draft up before the next meeting.

Board Member Jackson: None to report

8. NEW BUSINESS

Board Member Crump reported that a draft has been proposed for Policy B-5. The policy had been deleted last year because they had written B-9 which

actually covered several different aspects in the Farm and Home Program. When that was done, some of the wording would provide justification for what they call a Loss Payment Account. This has to do with if a veteran lost their home or had damage because of fire or other type causes, then there would be available funding to make repairs and living expenses. They requested that it be withheld until the next meeting. A copy has been provided to each of the members.

Board Member Jackson had no report on the homes. The trip to Chula Vista completes the cycle for him.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board Member Burke reminded the Board that this Board recommends names for the cemetery, they do not decide the official name; that goes back to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The four names discussed were The Sacramento Valley National Cemetery, Sacramento-Solano National Cemetery, Solano National Cemetery, and Dixon National Cemetery. Board Member Burke would like to recommend Sacramento Valley National Cemetery after contacting veterans and service organizations. Board Member Burke moved for the recommendation of the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery. Board Member Crump seconded. The vote was as follows:

AYES: Board member Burke, Crump, Jackson, Chong, Sinopoli

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Board Member Crump asked if someone could give a status of the Northern California cemetery.

Secretary Johnson informed the Board that he met with the folks in the cemetery administration. They have brought on board a director of the discussed cemetery. Contracting will be starting next year. They are moving forward.

10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – Three Minute Limit Board Policy Prohibits Response from Board Members

Board Member Crump encouraged the audience to let the Board know how they feel if there are any concerns or problems.

Under Secretary Brautigan informed the group that all 50 states compete to try to tap into that stream of \$85 million for the state home grants to build new homes or renovations. He encouraged the group to start lobbying or write letters, friendly letters to see if that amount can be increased somewhat. He also stressed the importance of letting the Board or his Department know of any concerns at any time, not just at Board meetings.

Mr. H. Jackson expressed his pleasure in serving the Board over the last two years.

Chairman Sinopoli informed the group of the importance of staying in contact with the legislators. You must work with them. He encouraged people not to sit and wait for someone else to do something, be proactive.

Public Comments: David Salopek, Tom Montague, Larry, Neil Remnant, John Fitzke, Hank as Chairman of the Yountville American Legion Committee, Jo Oddo, James Mussor, Kay Britt, M.C. Hockwood, Tom Sarriapone, James McNeer, Bob Stemmer

11. ADJOURNED at 11:39 a.m.

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS:

All meetings take place on Friday unless notified.

Next board meeting February, Clovis.

Yearly schedule is posted on web site: www.cdva.ca.gov/board

CLOSED SESSION (if necessary or required)

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